

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEETCASE NUMBER: TBDHLC DATE: October 25, 2021PC DATE:APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission (owner-opposed)HISTORIC NAME: Casa McMathWATERSHED: Johnson CreekNEIGHBORHOOD PLAN: Central West Austin CombinedADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 2501 Inwood PlaceZONING CHANGE: SF-3-NP to SF-3-NP-HCOUNCIL DISTRICT: 10

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff finds that the house meets the criteria for landmark designation and thus recommends the proposed zoning change from SF-3-NP (single family residence – neighborhood plan combining district zoning) to SF-3-NP-H (single family residence – neighborhood plan – historic landmark combining district zoning).

Should the Commission choose to release the permit, the staff recommendation is to require completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, including documentation of the site and exterior and interior architectural features.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION: Architecture, historical associations, and landscape feature

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The house is beyond the bounds of the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) and has never been included in a city survey.

CITY COUNCIL DATE:ACTION:ORDINANCE READINGS:ORDINANCE NUMBER:CASE MANAGER: Elizabeth BrummettPHONE: 512-974-1264

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS: Austin Independent School District, Austin Lost and Found Pets, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Central West Austin Neighborhood Plan Contact Team, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation, Preservation Austin, SELTexas, Save Barton Creek Assn., Save Historic Mundy District, Sierra Club, Austin Regional Group, TNR BCP - Travis County Natural Resources, Tarrytown Alliance, Tarrytown Neighborhood Association, West Austin Neighborhood Group

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**Historical Associations:**

The house was owned and occupied by Hugh and Frances McMath from the time of its construction until their deaths, and it remained in the McMath family until this year. Hugh McMath was a professor of architecture at the University of Texas who specialized in the study of Mexican architecture and was prominent in integrating Mexican schools of architecture into a larger sphere of American architectural studies.

Hugh McMath (1904–1992) taught at the University of Texas School of Architecture for 44 years. He was a renowned professor with a specialization in Mexican architecture, and he was instrumental in introducing his students to its principles. He primarily wrote and developed courses in pre-Hispanic and Colonial architecture. During the 1950s, he arranged annual summer trips of U.S. students to the Instituto Tecnológico of Monterrey, Mexico. His sponsorship helped the institute gain

admission to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, an international association of accredited architectural degree programs. McMath later organized architectural tours to promote interest in Mexican heritage and architecture.

McMath served as chair of the School of Architecture from 1946–1948, director from 1948–1950, and acting director from 1953–1956. During this time, McMath encouraged John S. Chase to apply to the architecture program, telling him about the pending *Sweatt v. Painter* case that desegregated the university. Chase went on to many firsts as an African American: the first to enroll at the University of Texas, the first to graduate with an architecture degree, and the first in Texas to become a licensed architect.

Beyond academia, McMath served in other leadership roles in architecture. He was co-chair of a committee to draw up a long-range plan for Pioneer Farms when it was formed in 1956. McMath also served as president of the Central Texas branch of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1958. He served on the AIA National Committee on Education and Foreign Relations. The Royal Society of Arts of Great Britain made McMath a Fellow to recognize his work to develop cultural relations with Mexico.

Frances McMath (ca. 1905–1986) graduated from the University of Texas in 1924. In addition to working for a nonprofit and in public education, she held multiple positions at the university, as secretary to the dean of the Graduate School and to the president of the university, and on the staff of the Dean of Women. She co-led or accompanied many trips to Mexico. She supported women at the university, including sponsorship of a university club welcoming female architecture students and wives of students, and involvement with the university's alumnae association of the Mortar Board, an honor society.

Architecture: The landmark designation criterion for architecture recognizes a range of architectural expression—from a place that clearly embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a recognized style to an architectural curiosity or one-of-a-kind building. Casa McMath bridges these categories, with its eclecticism as part of its significance.

The house is a one-story, irregular plan, flat- and low gable-roofed house with elements Mid-Century Modern design, plus eclectic modifications that can be interpreted through the lens of Critical Regionalism. The house was constructed in 1948 with 1952 and other undated additions. The original design may be the work of architect Ned Cole in association with Plan Con, the builders of the house. Hallmark Mid-Century Modern elements include a blocky exterior softened through the use of local, natural materials, the blending of the outside with the inside, and use of large windows. The house has expansive roof overhangs, a combination of horizontal and vertical wood siding, and stone veneer. Stands of oaks, along with stone planters, walls, and steps extending from the house, lend a strong connection between the house and landscape. Stonework on the chimney and walls is narrow random ashlar, while planters and site walls are uncoursed rubble stonework of later construction. Windows are groupings of steel casements that meet at building corners, with a floor-to-ceiling commercial storefront window that steps in next to the main entry.

The house appears to retain high integrity, with alterations made during the McMaths' ownership. These changes may represent Hugh McMath's evolving architectural interests and experimentation at his own home, bringing in influences from Mexican architecture and further grounding the house in its site. Modifications to the house include the addition of turned wood columns, geometric wood medallions, and vintage lighting fixtures. Pops of color punctuate the exterior, with green on the windows and cobalt blue on the doors and turned posts.

On the interior, the house has smooth and ribbed wood paneling and wall storage units constructed by Fabricon, a partner company to Plan Con. Some of the wood has a natural finish, while other areas are painted bright red. The two bedrooms have pink walls and storage units. Flooring throughout the house is Saltillo tile. A utility room addition to the side of the entryway has air-conditioning equipment that appears to tie into ductwork retrofitted under the gabled portion of the roof. Off of the living room, an alcove added behind the fireplace is painted cobalt blue and has a geometric stained-glass window.

Plan Con, Fabricon, and Ned A. Cole

The house at 2501 Inwood Pl. was built in 1948–49 by Plan Con, a local building construction firm that shared its location with Fabricon at 4601 E. 5th Street. Plan Con was operated by Carl B. Morris, president of Materials Distributing Company, with Maurice W. Cole as vice-president, Russell Horn as secretary, and Ned A. Cole as treasurer. Carl Morris's obituary noted that he was a real estate developer and home builder. Maurice Cole was the proprietor of Metal Equipment Company, a welding company at 4607 E. 5th Street. His brother Ned Cole was president and one of four founders of Fabricon. Russell J. Horn was a student at the University of Texas at this time.

Plan Con constructed tract houses in the Pecan Orchard (2000–2100 Peach Tree St.) and Sun Terrace subdivisions in 1949. Beyond their affordable price points (\$6,950 to \$8,450; in the mid-1950s, \$12,000 to \$14,000 was considered a median price), an advertisement billed a comprehensive package of design, construction, and loan negotiations; home features

included Fabricon wall storage units, central heating, and large metal casement windows.

Fabricon is listed as cabinet makers in the Austin city directories of the late 1940s but was more accurately a manufacturer of pre-fabricated wall storage units, roof trusses and windows—a pioneer in home design and the efficiency of interior storage. The firm, a collaboration of four GIs returning from World War II, planned houses with prefabricated wall units and increased interior storage. Plan Con was relatively short-lived, appearing in city directories and newspaper searches in 1949, as compared with Fabricon, which operated from 1946 through at least 1960.

Ned Cole graduated from the University of Texas School of Architecture in 1939. He was the architect of many of Fabricon's home designs. While research has not identified his specific contributions to Plan Con, he presumably played the same role as the sole architect within the company's leadership. Given Cole's his connections to Plan Con and likelihood that he studied under McMath at the University of Texas, there is a distinct possibility he was the architect of 2501 Inwood Place; however, no definitive connection was identified in the Hugh L. McMath papers at the Alexander Architectural Archive at the University of Texas at Austin.

As an architect and homebuilder, Cole rose to national attention in 1952–53 with his design of the National Association of Home Builders Trade Secrets house, a culmination of this national trade organization's efforts to incorporate innovative cost-cutting strategies and improve homebuilding quality. The home included signature features of Cole's architectural practice: tilt-up walls with precut lumber and modular windows, roof trusses that eliminate the need for interior bearing walls, and prefabricated storage partitions. Cole was the architect of seven houses in the Austin Air-Conditioned Village, designed in 1954 with Fabricon products, and built homes throughout Central Texas. He moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1961, where he continued his long career, including serving as a consultant on the construction of the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans.

While contemporaneous with Plan Con's tract houses, McMath's house is a unique design, constructed at a higher cost of \$9,500 with varied materials and articulation. As compared with Cole and Fabricon's later homes, this house is more traditional in its design and construction. In lieu of non-bearing wall panels and storage units dividing the space, load-bearing stud walls are a necessity with the house's sprawling plan and flat roof.

Critical regionalism

The Oxford *Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture* (2nd ed.) describes [critical regionalism](#) as a response to Modernism: "a strategy for achieving a more humane architecture in the face of universally held abstractions and international clichés. Coined by Alexander Tzonis (1937–) and Liane Lefaivre in 1981, the term was seized upon by [architectural theorist Kenneth] [Frampton](#), who argued that architects should seek regional variations in their buildings instead of continuing to design in a style of global uniformity using 'consumerist iconography masquerading as culture', and should 'mediate the impact' of universal civilization with themes drawn indirectly from the individual 'peculiarities of a particular place'." In Texas during this era, Critical Regionalism is most closely associated with San Antonio architect [O'Neil Ford](#), whose work sought to integrate regional architectural traditions with modern technology. Ford's designs were known for abstractions of traditional forms and use of richly textured local materials.

Although Hugh McMath did not design this house, his interventions quite literally take a modernist architectural form and seek to ground it, both through integration into the landscape and borrowing from regional architectural traditions. As built, the house already contrasted large metal windows and geometric forms with natural materials including unfinished wood siding and limestone. Subsequent changes took these aspects a step further, introducing wider roof overhangs, additional natural wood siding, and fieldstone planters that integrate the house into the site. McMath's study of Mexican architecture and traditional buildings, as well as a sense of creativity and reinvention, are evident in the modifications to the house—the use of color on the interior and exterior, geometric painted wood medallions, eclectic lighting fixtures, geometric stained glass, turned wood porch posts, and a carved wood oxen yoke hanging over the doors to the back patio.

Unfortunately, these modifications were made without building permits and do not meet code requirements. The extended overhangs are structurally undersized. Lighting fixtures are not exterior grade and are plugged into added electrical outlets. Aspects of the work appear unfinished, such as the varied soffit materials.

Landscape Feature: McMath's interventions extend into the site, which represents a significant designed landscape with artistic and aesthetic value. A natural drainage crosses the lot near the intersection of Inwood Place and Possum Trot, spanned by a wooden bridge leading to a concrete driveway. Curvilinear stone retaining walls frame the driveway and doors to the two-car garage. Low stone walls step up as the wooded site rises toward the house. Curving stone stairs lead from the garage to a sidewalk to the front door.

To the rear of the house is an exposed aggregate concrete patio, with an outdoor table under a deep roof overhang supported by turned posts. An adjacent patio has Saltillo tile set into pavers and is framed by stepped rectilinear retaining walls.

PARCEL NO.: 0113060508

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 9 & E 37.5 FT OF LOT 8 INWOOD PARK

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$8,500 (owner-occupied); city portion: \$2,500 (capped).

APPRAISED VALUE: \$1,025,772

PRESENT USE: Vacant; the applicant proposes to demolish the ca. 1948 house.

CONDITION: Fair

PRESENT OWNERS:

INWOOD FOREST LLC
3300 BEE CAVE RD STE 650-1186
AUSTIN, TX 78746-6600

DATE BUILT: ca. 1948




ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: Multiple; see discussion of architecture above.

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Hugh and Frances McMath

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 292'

NOTIFICATIONS
CASE#: PR 21-105009
LOCATION: 2501 INWOOD PLACE

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



PROPERTY INFORMATION







Applicant, 2021

Note: see additional photographs from October 7, 2021 staff visit to property at end of report.

Occupancy History

City Historic Preservation Office, City Directory Research, July 2021

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1959 | Hugh L. and Frances McMath, owners
Hugh – Professor, University of Texas
Frances – Clerk, O Henry Jr. High School |
| 1957 | Hugh L. and Frances McMath, owners
Hugh – Professor, University of Texas
Frances – Clerk, Board of Education |
| 1955 | Hugh L. and Frances McMath, owners
Acting director, School of Architecture, University of Texas |
| 1952 | Hugh L. and Frances McMath, owners
Professor, University of Texas |
| 1949 | The address is not listed in the directory.
NOTE: The house was built in 1948.
NOTE: Hugh L. McMath is listed as a professor at the University of Texas; he lived at 386a Deep Eddy Apartments. Frances McMath is not listed in the directory. |

Biographical Information

Hugh L. McMath (1904–1992) married Frances Marian Little (ca. 1905–1986) in Travis County in June 1937.

The 1940 U.S Census shows Hugh and Frances McMath as the renters of the house at 1801 Newfield Lane in Austin. Hugh McMath was 35, had been born in South Dakota, and was an assistant professor at the University of Texas. Frances McMath was also 35, had been born in Texas, and was the chief clerk at the Works Progress Administration office.

His 1942 World War II draft registration card shows that Hugh Lyon McMath was living at 2210-C Nueces Street in Austin; he was employed by the Department of Architecture at the University of Texas and was married to Frances McMath. He was born in 1904 in Watertown, South Dakota. He was 5’-11” tall, weighed 150 pounds, and had a light complexion with brown hair and blue eyes.

Miss Little Bride Of Hugh L. McMath

The marriage of Miss Frances Marian Little, daughter of Mrs. Henry Morrow Little, to Hugh L. McMath, on Friday morning at St. David's Episcopal church came as a surprise to many friends of the popular university couple.

Before the ceremony began, Lester Brenizer sang the nuptial

solo, with Carl Fehr at the organ.

The Rev. James Allen, pastor of the church, performed the double ring ceremony before members of the two families.

The bride, dressed in a blue tailored crepe with blue accessories and wearing white flowers, was given in marriage by her brother, Dr. Harry M. Little of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Mrs. Harry M. Little of Pittsburgh attended the bride, and Walter T. Rolfe attended Mr. McMath.

Immediately following the ceremony, the couple left for New York city by motor. On July 24 they will sail on the S. S. Europa for a trip abroad, returning to Austin about Sept. 15.

Mrs. McMath received her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Texas, later serving as secretary to the dean of the graduate school. In 1928 she became secretary to the president of the university. She is a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority and Mortar Board, honorary organization.

Mr. McMath, of Fargo, N. D., the son of Mrs. Miriam G. McMath, is an assistant professor of architecture at the university. He received his master of science degree in architecture from the university, and later attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, from which institution he received his master of science degree in 1936. He is an associate member of the American Institute of Architecture and of Sigma Chi fraternity and Tau Sigma Delta.

Architects Will Meet in Mexico City

Harwell H. Harris and Hugh L. McMath of the University of Texas will accompany 22 School of Architecture students to Mexico City for the Eighth Pan-American Congress of Architects this week.

Highlight of the meeting will be dedication of the National University of Mexico's new \$20,000,000 campus, one of the largest single building projects of modern times. Famous personages at the conference will include Frank Lloyd Wright, David Lillenthal and Mies Van Der Rohe.

The extended field trip fits into a general University program to promote better understanding between this country and Latin-American nations. The trip will be financed partly from funds provided by the University's Architectural Foundation and the Central Texas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Dr. Lewis U. Hanke, director of the University's Institute of Latin-American Studies, assisted in making field trip arrangements. Students scheduled to attend the meeting include:

Austin—Arthur C. Dykes Jr., 3407 Duval; S. M. Fitzpatrick, 2304 Swisher; Duane Hale LaRue, 4501½ Avenue H; A. William Modrall, 3309 Liberty; Mrs. Onny Burke Smith, 1901 Alameda Drive; Nick Terrazas, 1507B Brackenridge Apartments;

and Jack R. Turner, 1112 Enfield. Bagdad, Iraq—Hisham A. R. Munir.

Beeville—William Guy Rupe. Center—Howard C. Parker Jr. Dallas—William Overton Shelmire, Gordon L. Smith Jr.; and John Algot Tollins.

El Campo—Irwin Don Meyers. El Paso—Tom D. Conger. Grand Prairie—Benny H. Biderman.

Lamesa—Daniel H. Terry. McAllen—Julio Rafael Guerra. New Braunfels—James R. Weiers-

hausen.

Pharr—J. B. Hancock. San Antonio—Robert N. Lavery. Waco—C. D. Warren Jr.

Hugh McMath To Visit Mexico

Hugh L. McMath, acting director of the University of Texas Architecture School, will visit the Instituto Tecnológico in Monterrey, Mexico, Nov. 22-28. Professor McMath will take the Instituto's architecture department an application for membership into the Association of Collegiate Schools of Ar-

chitecture.

The association has a membership of some 70 United States and Canadian schools, but the Monterrey school will be the first in Mexico to hold membership in the association.

Professor McMath, who has been a member of the American Institute of Architects Committees on Education and International Relations, set up an architectural design workshop in the Monterrey school in 1950, and has taught there in summer sessions.

Examples of McMath's travel and work in Mexico, including a trip to extend an invitation to the Instituto Tecnológico in Monterrey, Mexico to join the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, The Austin Statesman, 10/13/1952 and 11/17/1955.



SUMMER IN MONTERREY—Several students from Austin high schools are attending the summer school session at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. On the front row are Pebble Stone, (left) daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leon Stone; Jeanne Richey, Mrs. Verna S. Richey; Linda Senterfitt, Mrs. Maurine Senterfitt; Katy Alderman, Mr. and Mrs. William B.

Alderman; Debbie Boyd, Mr. and Mrs. Bradford C. Boyd; and Beth Marsh, Mr. and Mrs. George Marsh. Second row students are Georgia Lochridge, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Lochridge; Lucy Ross, Dr. and Mrs. Raleigh R. Ross; Quita McMath and Professor and Mrs. Hugh L. McMath, group leaders; Ann Vernado, Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Vernado; Johanna Franke of Odessa and Mary Sue Marmion of San Antonio.

Group of high school students attending a summer school session at the Instituto Tecnológico, led by Hugh and Frances McMath and including their daughter, The Austin Statesman, 8/15/1962.

Mortar Board Alumnae Elect

Mrs. Tom Graham Will Head Austin Chapter

Mrs. Tom Graham was elected president of the Austin alumnae of Mortar Board at a luncheon Thursday at noon at the Home Economics tea house. Other officers who will serve with her are Mrs. Hugh McMath, vice president; Miss Anne Finch, secretary-treasurer.

The U-shaped table was decorated with purple and white iris as a centerpiece, with place cards in the Easter motif. The Easter theme also featured in the arrangements of Easter nests, and egg containers for the confections used the length of the table.

Miss Frances Louise Mueller, outgoing president, presided.

Those present were Mesdames Bob Armstrong, John A. McCurdy, J. Merlin Blockette, Raymond Hill, Dan Driscoll, Hugh Lynn, Raymond Everett, J. M. Frazier, Tom Graham, Stuart Harris, R. D. Henderson, Hugh McMath, W. H. McNeill, W. K. Miller, Fred Nagle, Jr., Everett Smith and Marion Webster.

Misses Edleen Begg Doris Clower, Dorothy Gebauer, Helen Cosgrove, Annie Hill, Thelma Lockwood, Lucy Moore, Annabel Murray, Elizabeth Powers, Alma Widen and Frances Louise Mueller.

Architects Wives Form UT Club

Mrs. Don Wrightsman, incoming president of the Student Architects' Wives' club of the University of Texas was on hand to greet new members of the group at a recent informal party in the Architecture Building.

She has announced that membership is open to wives of all architecture students and all women architecture students on the campus.

Other club officers are Mrs. Jim Carter, vice president; Mrs. John Nolostine, recording secretary; Mrs. Norman Hopkins, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Ron Luther, treasurer; Mrs. John Nill, historian; and Mrs. Robert Hayes, parliamentarian.

Special guests for the meeting were Mrs. Hugh L. McMath, sponsor of the new club, and Mrs. J. Robert Buffler. Both are wives of professors in the School of Architecture.

Frances McMath supported women at the University of Texas through multiple endeavors, The Austin American, 3/22/1942 and The Austin Statesman, 11/1/1955.

Historic Tract Donated For Pioneer Memorial

By LORRAINE BARNES

An historic 66-acre tract of land northeast of the city will become a pioneer memorial park commemorating the deeds of early-day settlers under terms of the gift to the Heritage Society of Austin.

Donors of the property in the scenic Walnut Creek area are Eugene V. Giles and his sister, Miss Laura Lewis Giles, who have given the tract in memory of their maternal grandparents, Frederic and Harriet Bachman Jourdan.

Mrs. Elizabeth Gardner, president of the Heritage Society, said a long-range plan for development of the park will include the restoration of the pioneer buildings and maintenance of a beautiful botanic garden which Giles has created on the Jourdan Spring Branch on the property as a memorial to his mother, Sallie Jourdan Giles. Eventually the park will be a replica of a pioneer Travis County settlement where visitors will see in authentic detail the homes, furniture, farm and ranch implements and miscellaneous items of a one-time plantation restored for permanent view.

The society will present citations to the donors in ceremonies Sunday at 4 p.m. on the south steps of the Capitol at opening of the Easter Promenade in the Capitol grounds. Judge Will Wilson of the State Supreme Court will give the welcoming address.

"Mr. Giles and his sister have entrusted to the Heritage Society a gift of rare value," Mrs. Gardner declared. "In beauty, history, and educational potential for new generations, I doubt that any heritage group in Texas has received a gift equal to this one."

Careful planning and design will go into development of the park, Mrs. Gardner announced, to preserve its pioneer atmosphere. William J. Lawson is chairman and Hugh McMath co-chairman of a committee appointed to draw up the long-range plan.

As a companion gift, Giles has given a log cabin to be moved onto the site, and other pioneer relics will be sought by the Heritage Society. In a nearby gravel bed are numerous fossil remains, intriguing to amateur and professional paleontologists, and the botanic gar-

den, on which Giles has labored more than a decade, contains many varieties of native plants which University of Texas botanists have asked Giles to show to students.

Here the canyon walls have been rocked up to a height of 40 feet and the banks terraced for a garden effect. Giles built a dugout on the scene—similar to the ones that housed many a pioneer family in the early days of Texas—and added a pergola on one side of the structure.

Legend and history combine in



Austin American-United Press

Eugene V. Giles points to the Walnut Creek tract he and his sister, Miss Laura Lewis Giles, have deeded to the Heritage Society of Austin for development as a pioneer memorial park. The gift will be formally accepted in a short program at the south entrance to the Capitol Sunday at 4 p. m., opening the Easter Promenade the Heritage Society is sponsoring to revive the once popular custom of strolling around the statehouse. The park, which contains buildings and a botanic garden, is on land purchased in 1852 by Giles' grandparents, Frederic and Harriet Bachman Jourdan.

Excerpt from article describing the establishment of Pioneer Farms, The Austin American, 4/1/1956.

Title Hugh L. McMath papers

Dates: 1928-1977

Abstract The Hugh McMath papers include textual and photographic material primarily documenting his 44-year teaching career in the School of Architecture at The University of Texas at Austin. He held a deep interest in the art and architecture of Mexico and developed courses in pre-Hispanic and Colonial architecture of Mexico and published several monographs on the subject. Record types include photographs, correspondence, student work, writings, and faculty papers.

Hugh Lyon McMath was born in Watertown, South Dakota, May 9, 1904.

McMath studied engineering and architecture at North Dakota Agricultural College (Fargo, North Dakota) in the 1920s, receiving a bachelor's of architecture in 1927. He was an instructor in architecture at North Dakota State College from 1927-1928; and at Bradley Polytechnic Institute in Peoria, Illinois from 1928-1929. He arrived in Austin in 1930 to teach at The University of Texas. Subsequently he received a master's in architecture from The University of Texas in 1934 and from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1936.

In 1942 McMath entered the U.S. Army Air Corps along with a number of other University faculty members. He served as an instructor and later as a director of the ground school at Moore Field Army Corps Base in Mission, Texas. He headed the educational guidance staff of the Austin Air Reserve Group in the 1950s and retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1964.

During his 44 years of teaching in the School of Architecture at The University of Texas, McMath served as chair from 1946-1948, director from 1948-1950, and acting director from 1953-1954. In addition to his private practice, McMath lists professional experience in the offices of Frederic J. Klein (Peoria, Illinois), Walter T. Rolfe (Austin, Texas), Walter C. Harris (Austin, Texas), Golemon and Rolfe (Houston, Texas), and McKee and Kamrath (Houston, Texas).

McMath held a deep interest in the art and architecture of Mexico. He developed courses in the pre-Hispanic and Colonial architecture of Mexico and published several monographs on the subjects. From 1950 until 1960 he organized an architectural workshop at the Instituto Tecnológico of Monterrey, Mexico, attended by students from all over the U.S. His sponsorship aided the admission of the architecture school at the Instituto Tecnológico into the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. He organized "Arctours" to Mexico in 1968, 1969 and 1970 to inspire interest in historic Mexican architecture by touring sites. Funded by a University Research Institute grant, he conducted a photographic survey of architecture in Puebla, Mexico, in 1968.

In 1957, serving as a consultant and coordinating architect for design and construction of the American School in Monterrey, he arranged an association of Monterrey architects and representatives from the Houston firm of Caudill Rowlett and Scott Architects and Planners.

McMath was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts of Great Britain for his work to develop cultural relations with Mexico. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the Texas Society of Architects and served on the AIA National Committee on Education and Foreign Relations.

Hugh McMath retired from The University of Texas in 1974.

From the Alexander Archives, University of Texas, <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00114/aaa-00114.html>.

JOHN S. CHASE: PAVING THE WAY—FINDING A PATH TO UTSOA

John S. Chase recognized that after earning his undergraduate degree from Hampton University and working as a drafter at an architectural firm in Philadelphia, the best way to further his career was to continue his education. In 1949, he moved to Austin, Texas, to begin working for the Lott Lumber Company, and he hoped to pursue further studies at UTSOA, the best architecture program in the country at the time. Meeting with the Dean of the School of Architecture, Hugh McMath, Chase inquired about studying at UTSOA, despite the University's strict policy of segregation. Dean McMath told Chase about the pending *Sweatt v. Painter* case that was being argued in the Supreme Court at the time in 1950, and McMath encouraged Chase to apply for the program in anticipation of the case's conclusion.

Online exhibit of the Architecture and Planning Library of the University of Texas at Austin,
https://utlibrariesarchitecture.omeka.net/exhibits/show/paving_the_way/finding_a_path.

<p>Frances Little McMath Mrs. Frances Little McMath, 81, of 2501 Inwood Place died at her home, January 27, 1986. She was a native Austinite and descendant of pioneer Texans. Mrs. McMath attended Austin public schools and the University of Texas, graduating in 1924 with a B.A. in</p>	<p>Austin American-Statesman Tuesday, Jan. 28, 1986, page B4</p>
<p>English. After graduating from college, she worked for the Russell Sage Foundation in New York City for several years. On returning to Austin, she was employed at the University in several capacities. Prior to her marriage, she was secretary to Dr. H.W. Harper, dean of the Graduate School, and for many years as secretary to the president of the University, Dr. H.Y. Benedict. In later years, she was employed in the Austin Public Schools. She then returned to the campus and worked on the staff of the Dean of Women, Margaret Peck. After her retirement, she and her husband, Hugh L. McMath, Professor emeritus of Architecture at the University, traveled extensively. Mrs. McMath was a mem-</p>	<p>ber of Pi Beta Phi, Mortar Board, the University Ladies Club, Pan American Round Table, the U.T. Retired Faculty Staff Association, the Women's Architectural League, and the Austin Symphony Orchestra Society. She is survived by her husband; a daughter, Quila, of New York; one niece; two nephews; and a host of friends. Memorial services will be held at 3:00 PM, Wednesday in the Colonial Chapel of the Cook-Walden Funeral Home with Dr. Robert Ledbetter officiating. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to the Scholarship Fund of the Retired Faculty Staff Association of the University of Texas at Austin, in care of the president's office or to a favorite charity. Arrangements by Cook-Walden Funeral Home, Lamar location.</p>

Obituary for Frances Little McMath, Austin American-Statesman, 1/28/1986.

Hugh Lyon McMath, former director of UT School of Architecture, dies at 88

November 17, 1992 | Austin American-Statesman (TX)

Hugh Lyon McMath, former director of the University of Texas School of Architecture and professor emeritus, died Sunday. He was 88.

McMath was director of the school for six years when the department of architecture separated from the College of Engineering in 1948.

McMath, who earned master's degrees in architecture from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and UT, began teaching at UT in 1930.

In 1950, he and his wife, Frances, began taking students from all over the country to study architecture during the summer at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores in Monterrey, Mexico.

Before teaching at UT, McMath taught briefly at North Dakota Agricultural College (now North Dakota State University) and Bradley Polytechnic Institute in Peoria, Ill.

4 Ex-GI's Pull New Idea And It Spells Sensation

Scoop up a few million men, shove them in a war bag and shake them up, and it's difficult to predict what will come out. Once in awhile it's a success story.

Four ex-GI's, ranging in age from 24 to 33, who landed in Austin when the war bag was dumped, have dug down deep to prove that such stories are still in vogue. And they've just about upset all the odds in doing it.

Starting with a string of chance meetings, an idea and \$5,000, they have in less than two years, brought their capital up to \$25,000. In addition, they've licked the problem of getting a new product accepted by the public. Orders of more than \$100,000 are on hand, yet unfilled.

The men are Ned Cole, 29, William Baker, 24, Watt Watkins, 29, and H. E. Cadwallader, 33, the sole owners of Fabricon Inc., one of Austin's most revolutionary industries which has taken over the building of a large portion of the walls in Austin homes.

Their walls, already tested and proven, are glimpses into the future where the last article of wasted space in homes—the walls—is put to use. Already many homes in Austin are built without rooms—just four outside walls, a floor and a roof. Fabricon Inc. then steps in with its factory-built walls—all of them closets, drawers and other storage areas—and divides the home into rooms.

Contractors like the walls, because through their use, the size of houses can be lessened, thereby cutting construction costs. Prospective home owners like them because they can keep the size of the house the same and gain additional floor space. Room-consuming closets, cabinets and trunks are completely out.

With the daring and ambition peculiar to young men, the factory of Fabricon Inc. was started before even the land on which to erect it was available.

Cole, an Austin architect and the man with the idea, and Watkins, a Dallas furniture maker, who met by a chance Army transfer during the Pacific war, rented a two-car garage on West Eighth Street and started construction of the plant early in 1946 before they even knew where they would place it.

As each individual part of the framework was built, it was carried outside and another piece started.

Before Cole and Watkins finished, Baker and his wife came to Austin to attend the University of Texas on the GI Bill of Rights and in their search for a place to live, answered an advertisement offering a room for rent in Cole's home.

Cole rented them the room and because Baker had arrived before the term was to start, Cole put him

to work, helping build the factory in the garage. Time slipped by, Baker didn't go to school and the three of them eventually saw that he was a necessary part of the firm. He was taken in.

The fourth member, Cadwallader, became associated with the others through a chance meeting of his wife and Mrs. Cole in a Sunday School class.

He came to Austin because during the war he married an Austin girl, the former Margaret Leslie, and although he taught industrial arts in an Ohio high school and held one degree, he planned to enter the University here and study law.

But through his wife's chance meeting with Mrs. Cole, Cadwallader soon met the other members of the firm. He sits up in the front office now, managing sales and other parts of the business end.

Cole still draws plans for new products and designs many of the homes in which they are to be used. Watkins and Baker manage the shop.

After the framework of the plant was built in the garage, land was obtained, but a critical shortage of still needed materials developed. Not to be whipped at that stage of the game, the men made their own.

An inscription, "Built by four soldiers with their bare hands, June 1, 1946," on the cornerstone of their plant at 4601 East Fifth Street offers a glimpse of what has gone before.

To get their materials, the men armed themselves with hoes, shovels, a mixing box and a new design for a concrete block and rolled up their sleeves.

They set up the pre-fabricated framework and then laid the outside walls themselves from the concrete blocks.

"It was like the blind leading the blind," Cadwallader said. "There wasn't a one among us who had ever laid as much as a brick before."

Starting with only one other man employed besides themselves and producing only \$1,500 in walls per month, the men have built the plant up until it now employs 20 persons and produces more than \$15,000 of products per month.

The original plant was 80 feet long and 30 feet wide. It has been expanded four times, extending its length to 240 feet. Another expansion program is underway.

The private lives of these four men are as closely associated as their business dealings. They, like most returning veterans with wives, were caught in the squeeze of Austin's housing shortage.

Baker had only the room he rented from Cole. Watkins moved five times in 14 months. Now they all live in a single building, a four unit apartment, where they have put the things they make into use.

Designed by Cole, the building sits down off the street level at 805 West 10th Street. Of brick construction and a "different" design, it has often been mistaken for a laundry and other business establishments, the main reason perhaps, because the rear of the apartment faces the street.

Visitors are nearly always startled when after descending from the street, they find four individual apartments, all with plate glass fronts and individual yards and arranged in such a manner as to provide the utmost privacy for each family.

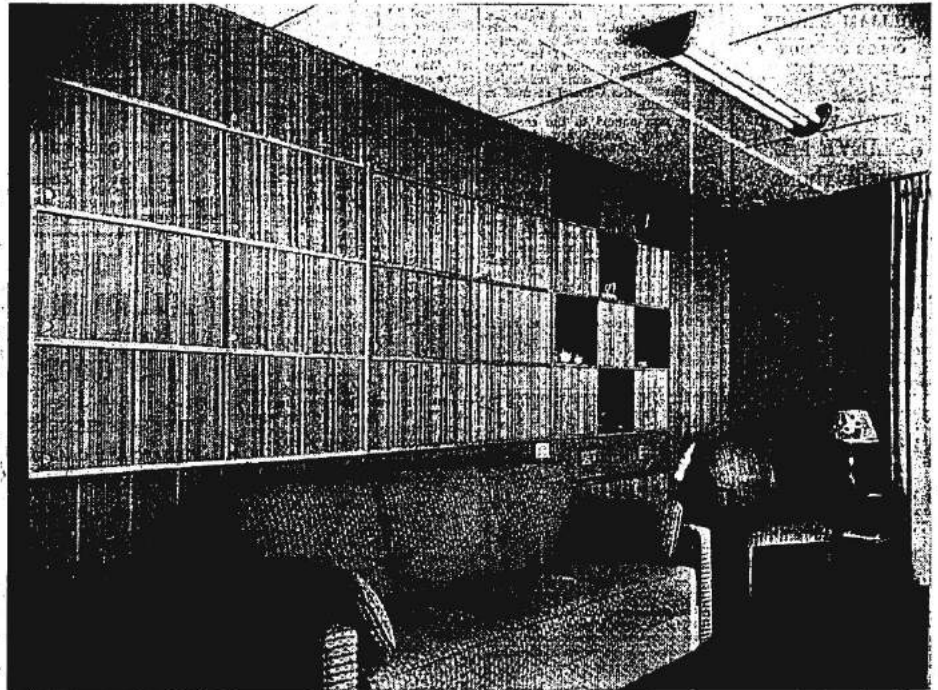
These men know they have something and undoubtedly have a rosy view on the future, but until only recently they have been too busy building their forest to see the trees.

War often makes strange bedfellows, but once in awhile a perfect blend is reached.



HOUSE SENSE—When four ex-GI's landed in Austin after the war, uprooted from their normal surroundings, they hit town with an idea about something new for the home, and by upsetting the odds against them made it pay off. "Why should the space consumed by walls be wasted?" they reasoned. Putting their reasoning into action, they built a plant with their own hands, naming it Fabricon. And now many Austin homes are built without rooms. When the contractor has finished, Fabricon enters and divides the homes into rooms with walls

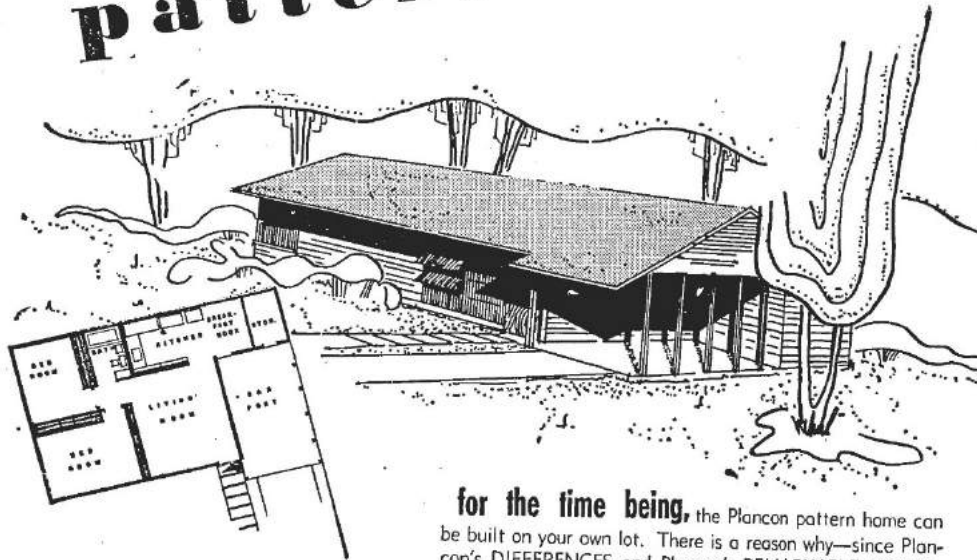
they manufacture—walls that are all closets, cabinets and other storage areas. The walls in their home (they all live in a four-unit apartment building) are shown as they can be arranged in a new pattern every day merely by sliding a few panels. The wall pictured is between a living-dining room and the kitchen. The opposite side, through the manipulation of other panels, provides all the kitchen cabinet space needed. The wall at right in both pictures opens into a bedroom closet on the opposite side, deep enough and tall enough for all garments.



Article on Fabricon and Ned Cole's role in the venture, The Austin Statesman, 2/27/1948.

"hard to believe . . . but it's true"

PLANCON pattern homes



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- A COMPLETE PACKAGE WHERE ONE CALL HANDLES EVERYTHING

THE PLANCON PACKAGE INCLUDES:	THE PANCON PATTERN HOME INCLUDES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An architecturally-designed home. • All loan negotiations. • Engineering and layout. • A turn key construction job. • All attendant fees except curing title defects in your property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful Fabricon wall storage units. • Youngstown sink units. • Central heating. • Large metal casement windows. • Rooms with living space.

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HOURS: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Advertisement for Plan Con's Pattern Homes, The Austin Statesman, 3/8/1949.

Austin Building Takes Healthy Step Forward

Austin is headed to another \$2,000,000 building construction month if the rate set for the first half of the month is maintained.

During the first 13 days of January, 124 permits totaling \$1,118,367 in value were issued. Commercial construction, lagging for the past three years, was beginning to show activity with 14 permits issued for \$360,245.

Residential and apartment house construction which was anticipated to show some decline maintained its activity with permits for 96 apartments, residences and additions granted for a total value of \$700,950. In all, 91 dwelling units had been projected during the first half of the month.

Only two of the 124 permits issued were non-taxable, the remaining 122 structures adding \$1,088,295 to the tax values of the city.

Major commercial permits issued during the first two weeks of January were for the new passenger station of the Missouri Pacific Lines at Third and Baylor Streets costing \$68,500, and the Citizens State Bank at 1904 Guadalupe involving a total estimated cost of \$103,463. Permits were issued to Sinclair

Refining Company for the erection of six new gasoline service stations in various parts of the city costing a total of \$107,500. These new stations will be located at 1301 Barton Springs Road, 1701 West 35th Street, 5307 Airport Boulevard, 801 East First Street, 4926 Georgetown Road and 2900 San Jacinto Boulevard. E. B. Snead Construction Company has been awarded contracts for these stations.

Highlighting residential construction already projected are 28 four-room and bath houses to be erected in the 2000-2100 blocks of Peach Tree Street in Pecan Orchard Subdivision at a cost of \$6,500 each with Ned Cole as contractor. Permits for their construction were issued to a group listed as Plan Con with Carl B. Morris as the applicant. This residential development will cost an estimated \$182,000.

Two major apartment house projects are being built in Enfield by Marion Barrett with a permit cost of \$25,000 each but estimated to cost \$110,000 when completed. Two-story rock veneer and frame apartment houses and carports containing 24 rooms and eight baths will be built at 1201-1203 Marshal Lane, and two-story brick veneer and frame apartment houses and carports will be constructed at 2509-2511 Enfield Road to give Austin two additional eight-unit apartment projects.

Ben Ogletree has been granted a permit for the construction of a 16-unit apartment house project at 301 West 31st Street to cost an estimated \$50,000. This project will contain 53 rooms and 16 baths.

Barnes Hoff is constructing a stone veneer residence and garage attached, containing seven rooms and two baths, at 4601 Laurel Canyon Drive in Highland Park at a cost of \$20,000.

Other larger construction projects include the two-story defense research laboratory on the University of Texas campus costing \$27,572, and the masonry addition to a business building at 1708-10 West 35th Street by R. G. Mueller. The Southern Pacific has been granted a permit to erect a masonry office building at 2303 East Sixth Street to cost \$500.

Permit Issued for \$63,500 Sigma Chi Chapter House

Construction of a new \$63,500 chapter house for Sigma Chi fraternity at 2701 Nueces Street was given the starting signal Monday with a permit issued to the Yarbrough Construction Company, general contractor, by John C. Eckert, city building inspector.

The stone veneer house will be two stories and a basement containing 13 rooms and five baths. Plans were drawn by Giesecke, Kuehne and Brooks of Austin.

Another large building project now under way is that of Plan Con, granted permits for construction of six frame residences and carports attached in Sun Terrace Addition at a total cost of \$49,000.

A brick veneer and frame residence with carport attached is being erected at 2400 Pemberton Place. This home containing nine rooms and four baths will cost \$34,267.

Permit for the construction of

a two-story brick veneer four-unit apartment house has been issued to Mrs. Edna Von Rosenberg. This building, composed of 20 rooms and four baths, is to be constructed at 102 West 30th at a cost of \$24,000.

Other permits of \$10,000 or more value include:

W. A. Cunningham, frame and stone veneer addition to residence, 2405 Woodmont, \$10,000.

Nash Phillips-Copus Homes, Inc., cutstone veneer residence and garage attached, 5100 Fairview Drive, Highland Park West, \$10,000.

Kohn Estate, brick veneer residence and garage attached, 5401 Shoal Creek, \$10,000.

Bill Tarver, frame residence and garage attached, 3213 Clearview, \$12,000.

Additional Plan Con homes planned for construction in 1949, The Austin Statesman, 9/26/1949.

Fabrimon Inc Ned A Cole pres Walt Watkins v-pres cabtmkrs 4601 E 5th

Plancon Inc (constn div) Carl B Morris pres Maurice W Cole v-pres Russell J Horn sec Ned A Cole treas bldg contr 4601 E 5th

Entries in the 1949 Austin City Directory for Fabrimon and Plancon.

Fabrimon Inc Ned A Cole pres cabt mkrs 4601 E 5th

Entry in the 1952 Austin City Directory for Fabrimon. There are no entries for Plancon or Carl Morris; Maurice and Ned Cole are listed with their other ventures, respectively Metal Equipment Co. and Fabrimon, and Russel Horn as a student at the University of Texas.

Permits

Receipt No. 11331 Application for Sewer Connection No. 25922
 Austin, Texas. 1-22-49
 To the Superintendent of Sanitary Sewer Division, City of Austin, Texas
 Sir:— 2501 INWOOD PARK
 I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by
PLANCON INC. at 1400 WAYSIDE DR. Street,
 further described as Lot 9 Block — Outlot — Division —
 subdivision INWOOD PARK Plat 152 which is to be used as a RES
 In this place there are to be installed 7 fixtures. Plumbing Permit No. 31966
 I agree to pay the City of Austin, the regular ordinance charge. 1-24-49
 Depth at Prop. Line 2'-4" at main Respectfully,
 Stub Out 29' W of curb at main curb
 (Location) same as above PORTER
 Date 2-10-49
 By B. Hernandez
 NOTE: Connection Instructions: 1. 6" C.I. Pipe in Ditch at 10' from Main
2. Set in 2' dug - Rock B-1101

Application for Sewer Connection, 1949

WATER SERVICE PERMIT C No. 152 9 **3310**
 Austin, Texas
 Received of PLANCON Date 4-9-49
 Address 2501 INWOOD PLACE
 Amount TWENTY & NO/100 20/00
 Plumber PORTER PLBG SR. Size of Tap 3/4"
 Date of Connection 4-22-49
 Size of Tap Made 3/4"
 Size Service Made —
 Size Main Tapped —
 From Front Prop. Line to Curb Cock 2.5'
 From S Prop. Line to Curb Cock 40'
 Location of Meter CURB
 Type of Box LOU
 Depth of Main in St. —
 Depth of Service Line —
 From Curb Cock to Tap on Main —
 Checked by Engr. Dept. 5-12-49 L.H.
INDEXED

No. Fittings	Size
1	Curb Cock
1	Elbow
1	St. Elbow
1	Reducer
1	Pipe
1	Lead Comp
1	Nipples
1	Union
1	Plug
1	Tee
1	Stop
1	Box
1	Lid
1	Valves
1	Job No. <u>W-323-5024</u>
1	Req. No. <u>11 Rob</u>

Water Service Connection, 1949

2501 Inwood Place

Hugh L. McMath

~~1400 Wayside Drive~~

152

9

Inwood Park

Frame residence with garage attached.

39174 9-29-48

\$9500.00

Plan Con

7

Building Permit, 1948

Hugh L. McMath

2501 Inwood Place

152

9 and east 1/2 of 8

Inwood Sub.

Frame and masonry addition to residence

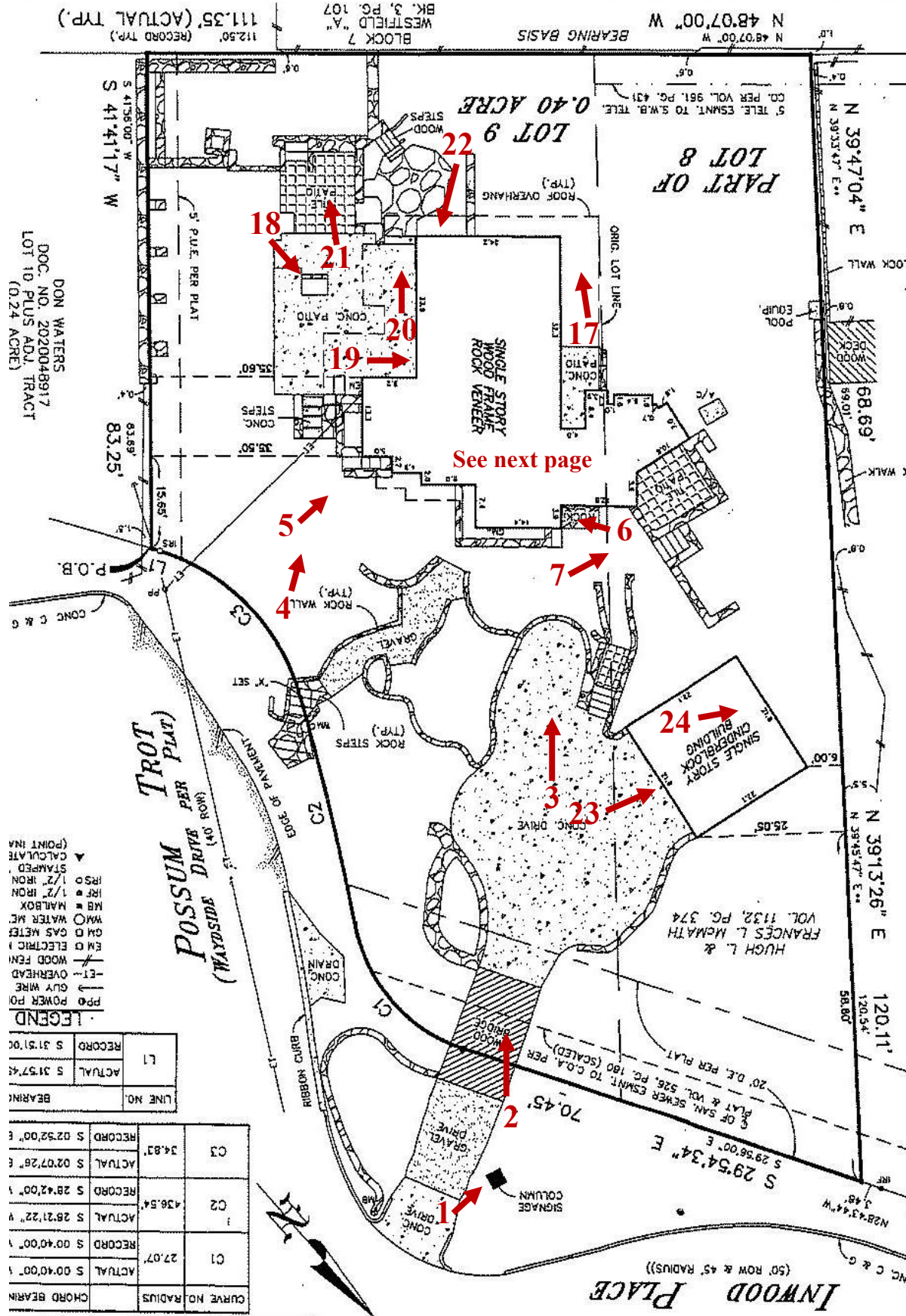
49715 1-2-52

\$3000.00

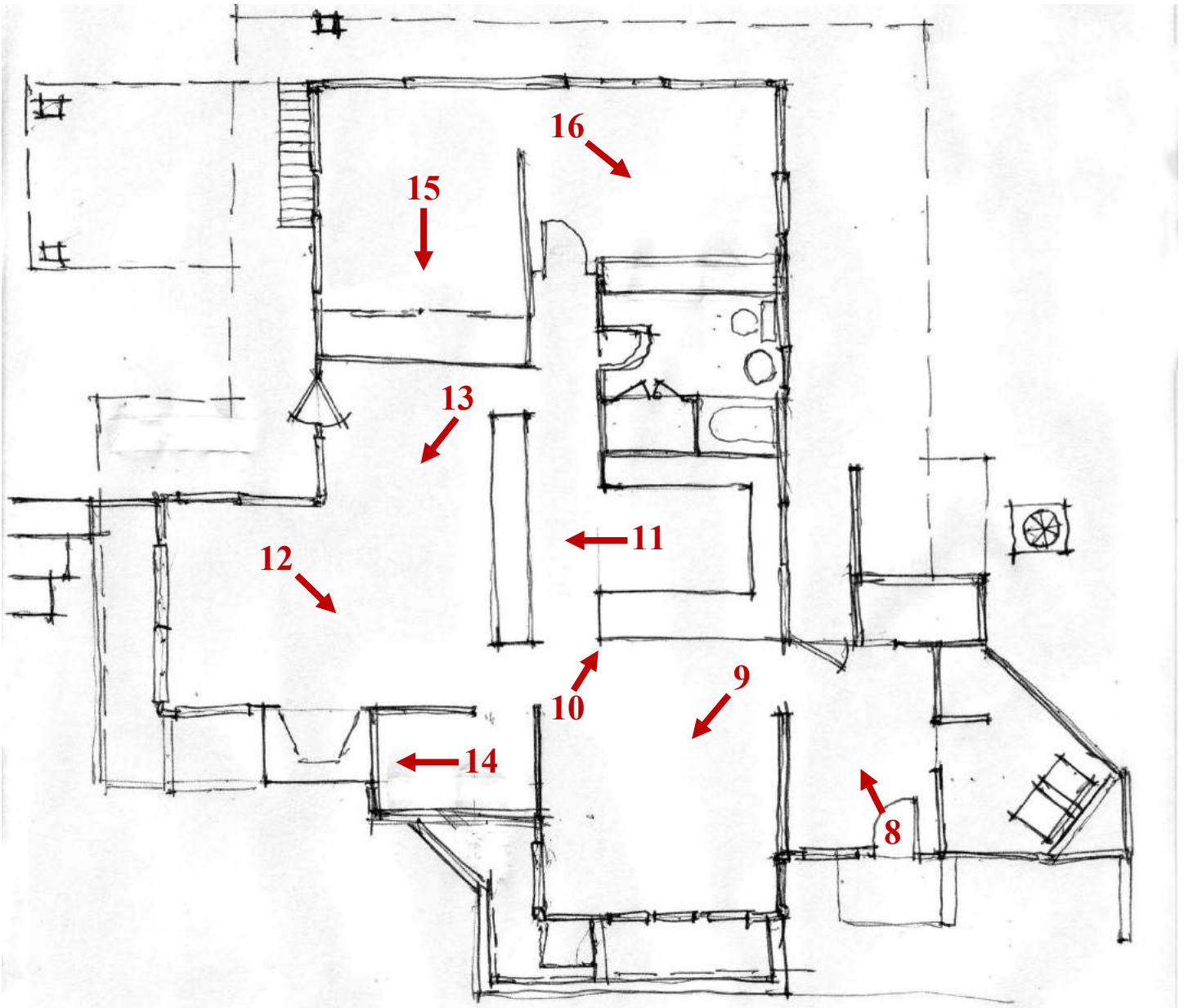
Owner

Building permit to Hugh McMath for an addition, 1952

STAFF SITE VISIT PHOTOGRAPHS



Site visit photographs, Historic Preservation Office staff, October 7, 2021.



Site visit photographs, Historic Preservation Office staff, October 7, 2021. Plan is not to scale.



Figure 1. Entry marker for Casa McMath



Figure 2. Wood bridge across natural drainage near the corner of Inwood Place and Possum Trot



Figure 3. Stone retaining wall and steps from driveway to the house



Figure 4. Low site walls and wooded site



Figure 5. View of the house from the east



Figure 6. Front entry



Figure 7. Stone gate and patio next to front entry



Figure 8. Entryway



Figure 9. Dining room



Figure 10. Kitchen



Figure 11. Fabricon room divider between kitchen and living room



Figure 12. Living room



Figure 13. Living room

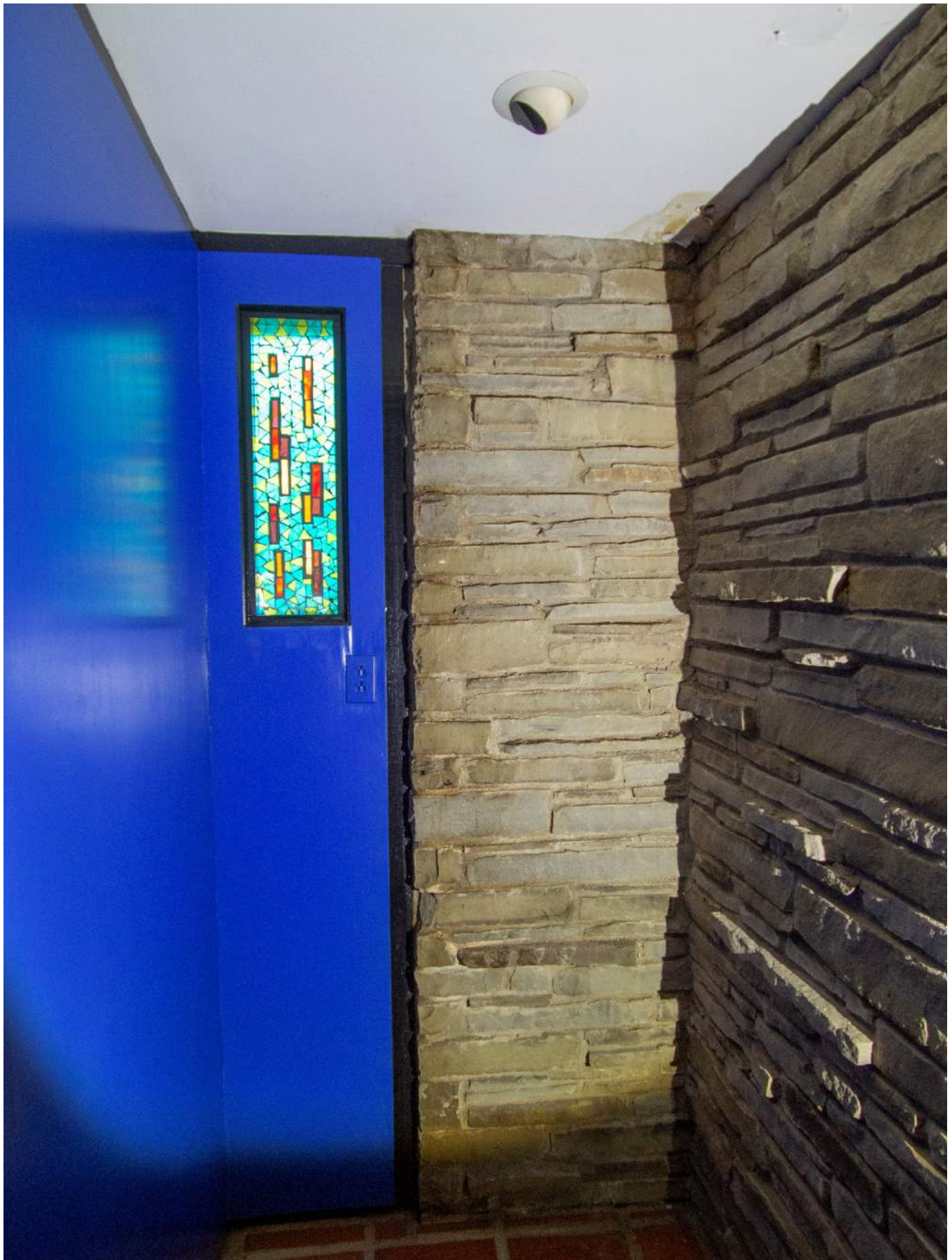


Figure 14. Alcove off of living room with stained glass



Figure 15. Fabricon wall storage unit in larger bedroom



Figure 16. Second bedroom



Figure 17. Extended roof overhang



Figure 18. Back patio



Figure 19. Back door



Figure 20. Back patio



Figure 21. Patio



Figure 22. Retrofitted lighting is not hardwired and does not meet code



Figure 23. Garage has rotten fascia



Figure 24. Interior of garage exhibits extensive rot resulting from site grading and drainage challenges

Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Architects and Designers

The following architects and designers are presented in order of prominence relative to the Austin Air-Conditioned Village. Ned A. Cole helped select Austin as the site of the experiment through his role as chairman of the National Association of Home Builders air-conditioning subcommittee, served as project manager for the construction, and designed seven of the houses. H. D. Powers designed five houses, J. Eugene Wukasch designed two, and Fred Winfield Day, Jr., W. R. Coleman, and Oran Vaughan each designed one home in the Village. While some found more critical acclaim in their careers than others, collectively their work is representative of mid-century residential design in Austin's middle class, suburban neighborhoods.

Ned Ansel Cole (1917–2008)

Ned Ansel Cole was born in Ferris, Texas. He earned a degree in architecture with honors from the University of Texas at Austin in 1939 and subsequently began building houses and teaching in the architecture department. Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1941, Cole served in the South Pacific building infrastructure on Guam and in the Philippines.²¹⁵

Cole returned to Austin after World War II and with three other veterans founded Fabricon, Inc. The firm designed and produced innovative prefabricated wall storage units that would serve as a centerpiece of Cole's residential architecture. The founders constructed their factory building in modular sections in a rented garage, before the ultimate site of the facility at 4601 East Fifth Street in Austin had been selected and obtained. The hand-cast concrete block cornerstone of the building reads, "Fabricon, built by four soldiers with their bare hands, 1 June 1946." In place of traditional site-built, load-bearing walls, the Fabricon wall units turned room dividers into organized storage with built-in sliding doors and drawers. An *Austin Statesman* article characterized the units as a modern space-saving measure in contrast with outmoded storage methods—"Room-consuming closets, cabinets and trunks are completely out."²¹⁶ Cole's role in the company was designing the product as well as many of the homes that used it. In response to Austin's postwar housing shortage, he also designed a four-unit apartment building at 805 W. Tenth Street, replete with Fabricon products, that he and his family occupied along with the other founders.

In 1952, Cole designed a demonstration home for the Coleman Company, headquartered in Wichita, Kansas (Figure 41). Prompted by increasing construction of air-conditioned housing, the home provided a training ground for dealers and distributors through nearly fifty copies built in various locations. Though comparable in size and remarkably similar to Cole's later designs for the Austin Air-Conditioned Village, the house was estimated to sell for \$14,000 to \$15,000, not including the cost of land; at \$1,900, the air-conditioning equipment constituted a high percentage of the price. The same year, Cole also worked with Houston builder P. S. Luttrell on increasing the efficiency of an air-conditioned model intended for large-scale construction.²¹⁷ Cole was awarded a citation by the ACRI in 1953 for his "initiative and noteworthy leadership in increasing public interest in the use of residential air conditioning."²¹⁸

Cole rose to national attention with his design for the NAHB Trade Secrets house (Figures 42–43). Operation Trade Secrets, initiated in 1951 by NAHB president Bill Atkinson, provided a forum for the nation's leading builders to share innovative cost-cutting strategies and ideas for improving the quality of their product. The initial venture in October was met with such enthusiasm that a series of regional meetings were scheduled later in the year, and a second round of more

²¹⁵"Ned Ansel Cole," *The Advocate*, Sept. 16–18, 2008, accessed Sept. 13, 2020, <https://obits.theadvocate.com/obituaries/theadvocate/obituary.aspx?n=ned-ansel-cole&pid=117526971>.

²¹⁶"4 Ex-GI's Pull New Idea and It Spells Sensation," *The Austin Statesman*, Feb. 27, 1948, 15.

²¹⁷"Air Conditioning Demonstrated," *House & Home* 2.4 (Oct. 1952): 140; "Operating Costs are Lower Than You Think..." *House & Home* 5.3 (Mar. 1954): 110; and "What are the Plans of the Merchant Builders?" 86.

²¹⁸AAHB and NAHB, *Austin Air-Conditioned Village Plan Book*, n.p.

Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

than twenty conferences held in 1952.²¹⁹ As a means of showcasing some of the most notable ideas that surfaced during the meetings, the organizers sought to coalesce the various methods into a single Trade Secrets house to be built throughout the U.S. Of the coordinating committee members, Cole's status as both architect and builder placed him in an ideal position to design the house, in which he incorporated some of the signature features of his own practice. Tilt-up walls utilizing precut lumber and modular windows, recommendations of the conferences, significantly decreased construction time. Atop these, Cole placed preassembled roof trusses to eliminate the need for interior bearing walls. The resulting open interior provided a notable advantage: sub-contractors could finish walls and flooring without obstructions or the need to cut materials to fit, thereby expediting the process and reducing waste. The trusses also permitted the use of prefabricated or site-built partitions and storage walls, which occupied less floor space and provided more adequate storage than traditional closets. Early in 1953, models of the 1,332 square foot, three-bedroom house were constructed simultaneously by twenty-three builders in fourteen states. Openings drew record crowds, and by May, over 200 builders in the U.S. and Canada had ordered plans for the house. If put into large-scale production, the anticipated selling price of the house was \$15,000.²²⁰

Cole incorporated a number of planning ideas and construction methods from his earlier work into the house he designed and built with Fabricon for Austin's Parade of Homes in 1953, itself near-identical to the seven houses he designed for the Austin Air-Conditioned Village. The predominantly rectangular plan, the same from house to house with minor variations, represents a simplification of the L-shaped layout of the Trade Secrets house. Each made use of roof trusses, storage walls, and a new Fabricon item: prefabricated metal gable ends, corrugated to provide attic ventilation (Figures 44–46).²²¹ Despite these commonalities, Cole achieved remarkably diverse exterior appearances in the Air-Conditioned Village homes. Cladding materials included brick, asbestos, and stucco. Variations in massing were effected through the orientation of each house, with its long or short façade facing the street, and the location of its garage or carport, whether abutting the house or connected by a breezeway. The resulting stylistic treatment ranged from a side-gabled Ranch house, with low, horizontal lines, to a front-facing Contemporary dwelling, with exposed beams and columns supporting the gable and detached carport (see Figures 36–37 and 47–48).

Cole's designs for Fabricon were built throughout the state, in Austin, Houston, Fort Worth, and smaller central Texas communities. In 1961, he moved to Baton Rouge to work for another homebuilding company. Shortly thereafter, he founded a consulting firm, ushering in "a second long career as a researcher and consultant for a myriad of projects, including the Superdome in New Orleans, pipelines, geothermal power and many legislative and regulatory issues."²²² In his chronicle of the building of the Superdome, Dave Dixon gives Ned Cole exclusive credit for identification of the site for the stadium as a researcher for Gulf South Research Institute.²²³ Cole retired in 1983 and died in 2008.

²¹⁹"Operation Trade Secret," *Architectural Forum* 95 (Nov. 1951): 213; "Top Builders Reveal More Trade Secrets," *Architectural Forum* 95 (Dec. 1951): 130; and "'Operation Trade Secrets' in Full Swing Again," *House & Home* 2.2 (Aug. 1952): 108.

²²⁰"\$15,000 'Trade Secrets' House," *Life* 34.1 (Jan. 5, 1953): 8–15; "Is This 1953's Most Influential House?" *House & Home* 3.1 (Jan. 1953): 99–107; "First Trade Secrets Houses Attract Record Crowds," *House & Home* 3.2 (Feb. 1953): 41; "The Trade Secrets House and the U.S. Builder," *House & Home* 3.3 (Mar. 1953): 114–19; and "Trade Secrets Houses Begun in 40 States, Canada, Hawaii," *House & Home* 3.5 (May 1953): 55. See also "Ned Cole's Idea Factory," *Architectural Forum* 95 (Aug. 1951): 162–65, 240.

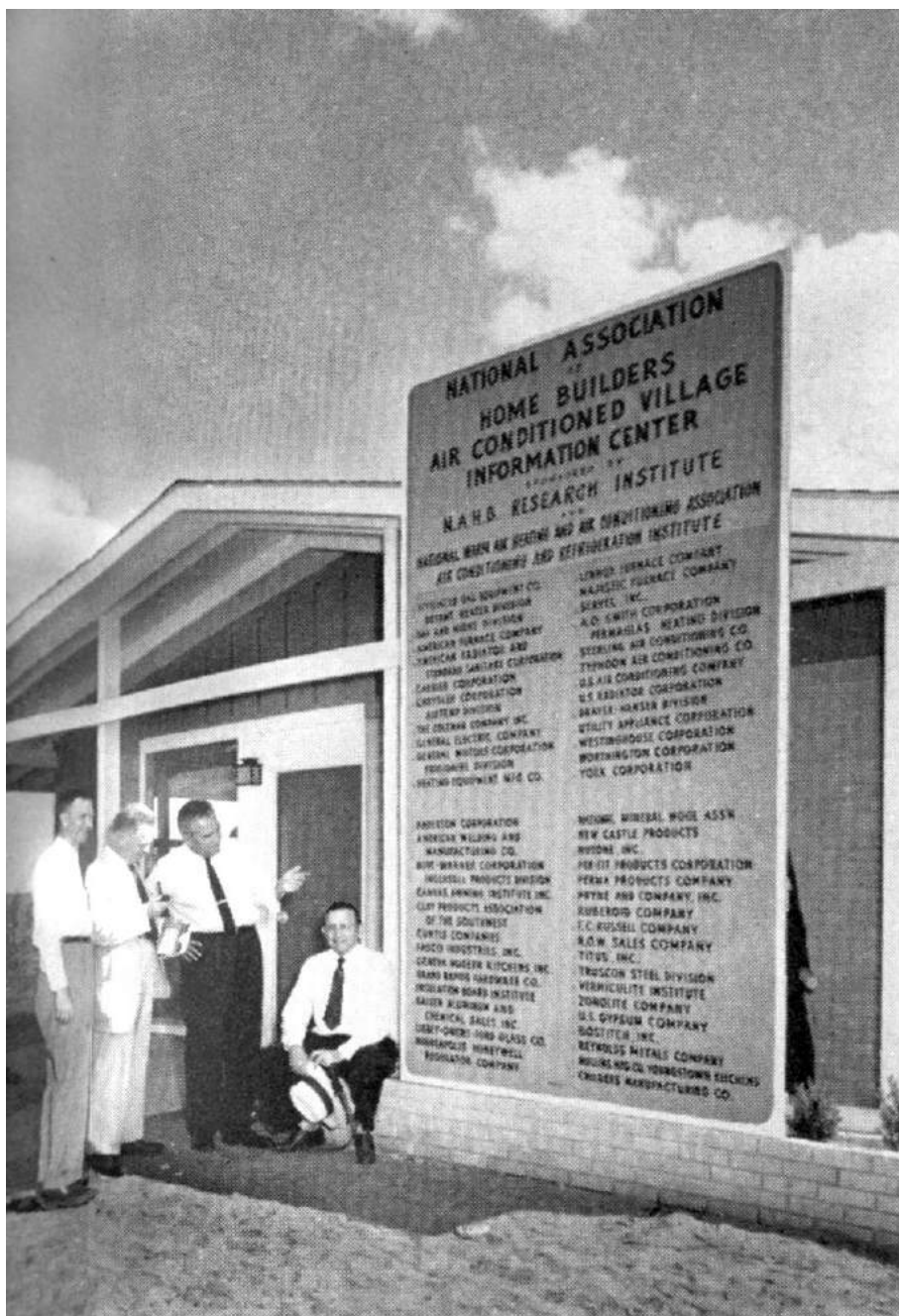
²²¹Cole's 1953 Parade of Homes entry is located at 4906 Westfield Drive. See "One Big Room Idea Provides for Convenience and Economy," *The American-Statesman*, Sept. 20, 1953, E-10 and "What Can You Learn about Summer Cooling from NAHB's Air-Conditioned Village," 132.

²²²"Ned Ansel Cole."

²²³Dave Dixon, *The Saints, The Superdome, and The Scandal: An Insider's Perspective* (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing, 2008): 101.

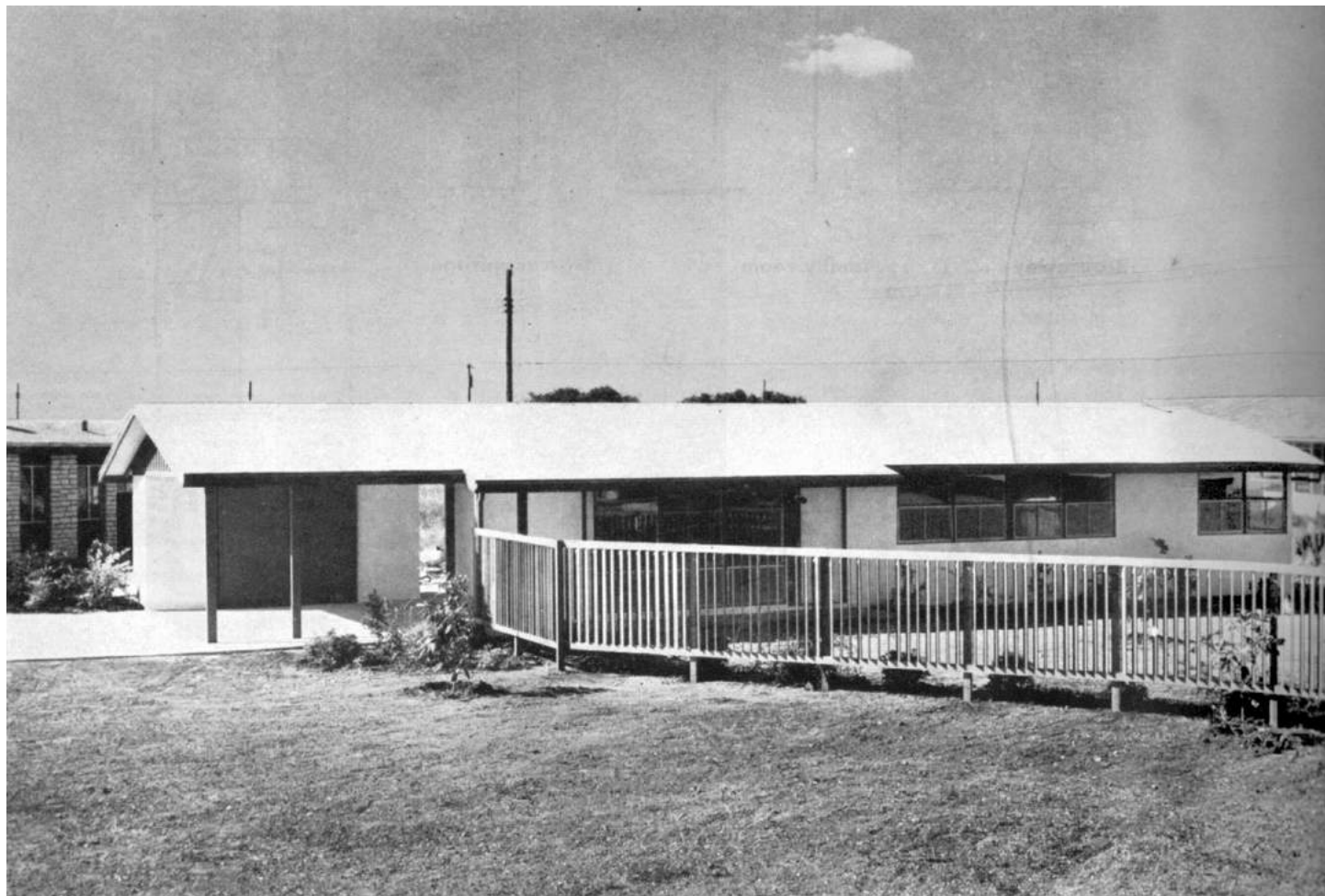
Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 19. Pictured from left: Ned Cole, Len Haeger, Earl Smith, and Dick Hughes of the National Association of Home Builders at Austin Air-Conditioned Village Information Center, 2501 Twin Oaks Drive. Photo by Dewey G. Mears, "What Can You Learn About Summer Cooling from the NAHB's Air-Conditioned Village," *House & Home* 6.2 (Aug. 1954): 129.



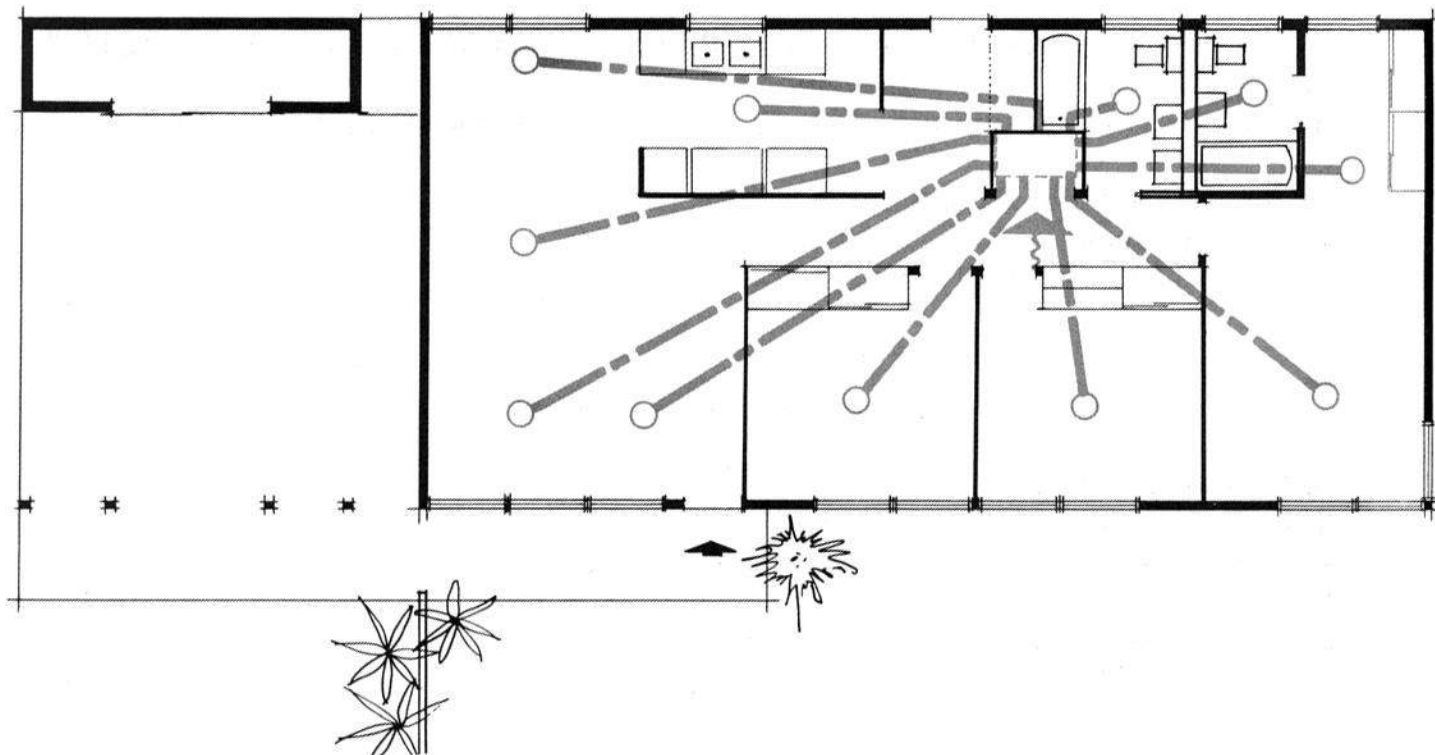
Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 36. Utility Home, Ned A. Cole (architect) and George Maxwell (builder), 2602 Park View Drive.
Photo by Dewey G. Mears, "Air-Conditioned Village Report," *House & Home* 7.3 (Mar. 1955): 152.



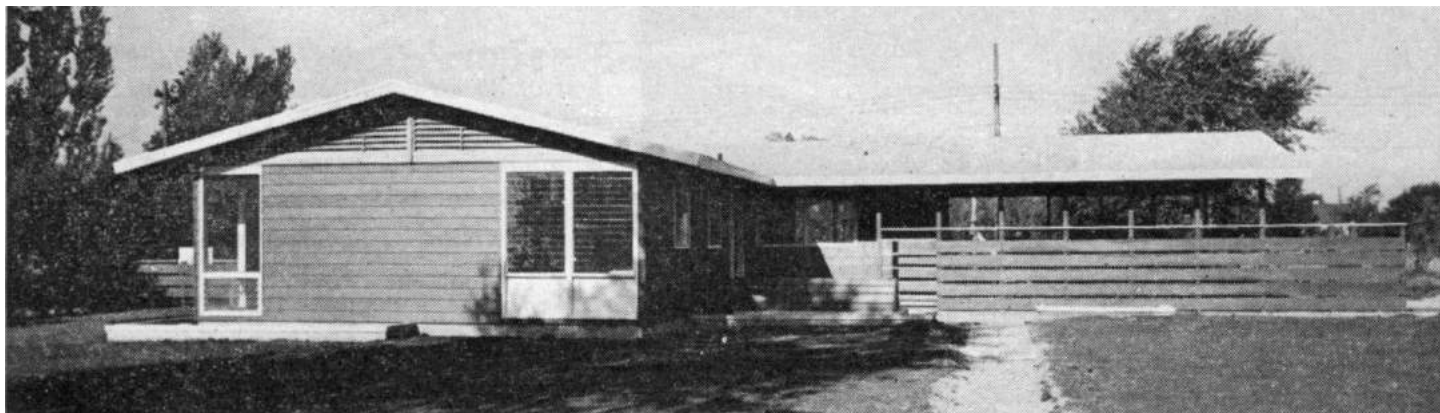
Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 37. Utility Home, Ned A. Cole (architect) and George Maxwell (builder), 2602 Park View Drive.
National Association of Home Builders Research Institute, *Residential Air Conditioning: A Summary
Report of the Austin Air Conditioned Village Project* (n.p., n.d.), 40.



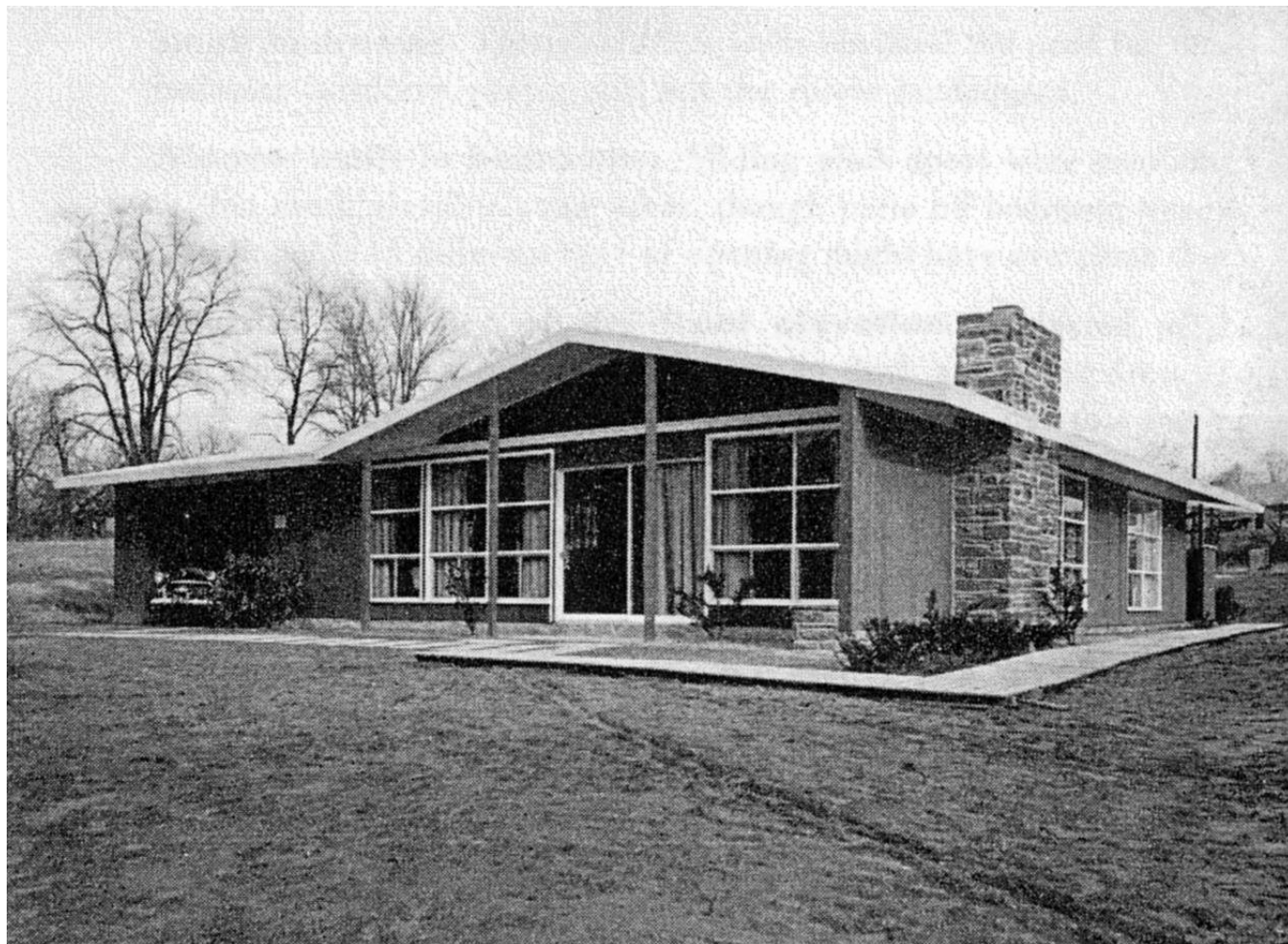
Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 41. Coleman Co. Demonstration House, Ned A. Cole (architect), Wichita, Kansas, 1952.
“Air-Conditioning Demonstrated when Architect Joins with Manufacturer to Present \$15,000 Builder’s House,” *House & Home* 2.4 (Oct. 1952): 140.



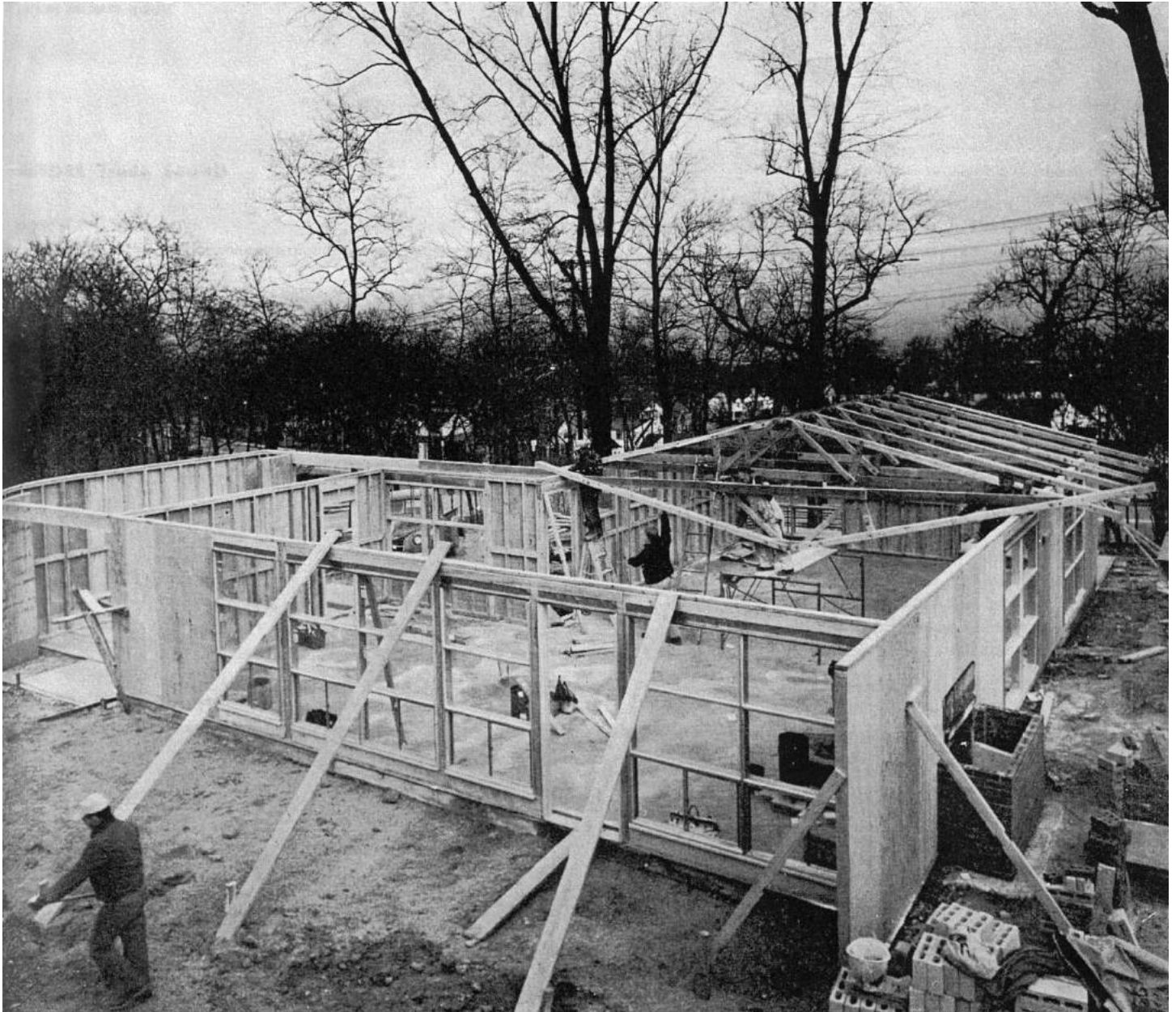
Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 42. Trade Secrets House, Ned A. Cole (architect), built in 14 states across the U.S. in 1953.
“The Trade Secrets House and the U.S. Builder,” *House & Home* 3.3 (Mar. 1953): 114.



Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 43. Trade Secrets House, Ned A. Cole (architect), built in 14 states across the U.S. in 1953.
“The Trade Secrets House and the U.S. Builder,” *House & Home* 3.3 (Mar. 1953): 119.



Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 44. Roof trusses create an open interior in a Ned A. Cole-designed house in the Austin Air-Conditioned Village, 1954.

Dewey G. Mears Photograph Archive (AR.2014.029), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Texas, May 4, 1954, C-19599.



Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 45. Built-in wall storage unit manufactured by Fabricon. Utility Home, Ned A. Cole (architect), George Maxwell (builder), 2602 Park View Drive.
Photograph by the author, 2005.



Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 46. Prefabricated metal gable vent manufactured by Fabricon. Utility Home, Ned A. Cole (architect), George Maxwell (builder), 2602 Park View Drive.
Photograph by the author, 2005.



Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 47. Bryant Heater Home, Ned A. Cole (architect), Wallace L. Mayfield (builder), 6602 Nasco Drive.
Photo by Dewey G. Mears, "What Can You Learn about Summer Cooling from NAHB's Air-Conditioned Village," *House & Home* 6.2 (Aug. 1954): 136.



Austin Air-Conditioned Village Historic District, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 48. Bryant Heater Home, Ned A. Cole (architect), Wallace L. Mayfield (builder), 6602 Nasco Drive.
National Association of Home Builders Research Institute, *Residential Air Conditioning: A Summary Report of the Austin Air Conditioned Village Project* (n.p., n.d.), 8.

